

# Service Area Plan

## Department Of Conservation And Recreation

### Financial Assistance to Soil and Water Conservation Districts (50320)

## Service Area Background Information

### Service Area Description

To provide financial assistance to Virginia's Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) for support of their operations which conserve soil and water resources, improve water quality, coordinate local conservation activities, and maintain water control structures they own.

### Service Area Alignment to Mission

Supporting the state's 47 SWCDs provides a direct, local delivery system of programs and services that improve soil and water resources, coordinated through the Commonwealth to achieve regional and state natural resource objectives.

### Service Area Statutory Authority

- The Department shall be assisted in performing its nonpoint source pollution management responsibilities by Virginia's soil and water conservation districts. Assistance by the soil and water conservation districts in the delivery of local programs and services may include (i) the provision of technical assistance to advance adoption of conservation management services, (ii) delivery of educational initiatives targeted at youth and adult groups to further awareness and understanding of water quality issues and solutions, and (iii) promotion of incentives to encourage voluntary actions by landowners and land managers in order to minimize nonpoint source pollution contributions to state waters. Code of Virginia, Title 10.1, Chapter 5, § 10.1-104.1.B. Department to be lead agency for nonpoint source pollution program.
- The Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board is authorized to approve the creation, boundary modification, and discontinuance of soil and water conservation districts; to approve applications for federal aid for soil and water conservation programs; and to make loans from state funds to local authorities for such programs; and the board may give or lend financial aid and other assistance to soil and water conservation districts. The board is authorized to promulgate regulations to carry out these functions. The director provides department staff necessary for the execution of the functions of the board. Code of Virginia, Title 10.1, Chapter 5, Articles 2 and 3.
- The Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board and the department have issued guidelines for realignment of district boundaries and instructions, policy statements, and forms for administration of the loan and grant programs.

### Service Area Customer Base

Customer(s)	Served	Potential
Soil and Water Conservation Districts	47	47

### Anticipated Changes In Service Area Customer Base

There are no anticipated changes in the customer base.

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#### **Service Area Partners**

Agricultural Community

#### **Service Area Partners**

Boards and Foundations

#### **Service Area Partners**

Chesapeake Bay Program (Includes the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Maryland, Pennsylvania, and the District of Columbia)

#### **Service Area Partners**

Contractual Services

#### **Service Area Partners**

Engineers and Consultants

#### **Service Area Partners**

Federal Agencies

Environmental Protection Agency; Natural Resources Conservation Service; Tennessee Valley Authority; U.S. Forest Service; U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

#### **Service Area Partners**

Local Governments

#### **Service Area Partners**

Non profits

#### **Service Area Partners**

Regional Planning District Commissions

#### **Service Area Partners**

Soil and Water Conservation Districts

#### **Service Area Partners**

State Agencies

Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services; Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy; Virginia Department of Environmental Quality; Virginia Department of Forestry; Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries; Virginia Department of Health; Virginia Department of Transportation; Virginia Institute of Marine Science

#### **Service Area Partners**

Vendors

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#### Service Area Products and Services

- Financial Assistance
- Technical Assistance
- Public Education
- Public Information
- Public Safety (dam safety, law enforcement, etc.)

#### **Factors Impacting Service Area Products and Services**

- Appropriations (funding amounts and guidance) provided by the General Assembly.
- Changes to the number of SWCDs (creation and/or division of SWCDs requiring additional financial support).
- Changes in the role of SWCDs due to the Administration's or General Assembly's actions.

#### **Anticipated Changes To Service Area Products and Services**

- In order to achieve the Commonwealth's required water quality improvements, the Administration and General Assembly are exploring funding solutions that would provide a permanent, sufficient, and stable source of funding. The SWCDs would be one of the key partners in delivering agricultural best management practice cost-share funding to the agricultural community. This would require a significant increase to the services provided by the Districts and will require a ramping up in both District and DCR staff to deliver these services.

#### Service Area Financial Summary

This General Fund appropriation is distributed to the Soil and Water Conservation Districts in accordance with program, financial, and resource allocation policies established by the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board.

For Virginia to achieve its Chesapeake Bay, TMDL, and other water quality goals, increased funding to the Districts for service delivery and increased constituent outreach will be a critical element.

	<u>Fiscal Year 2007</u>		<u>Fiscal Year 2008</u>	
	General Fund	Nongeneral Fund	General Fund	Nongeneral Fund
<b>Base Budget</b>	\$4,818,440	\$0	\$4,818,440	\$0
<b>Changes To Base</b>	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>SERVICE AREA TOTAL</b>	<b>\$4,818,440</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$4,818,440</b>	<b>\$0</b>

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## Service Area Objectives, Measures, and Strategies

### Objective 50320.01

***Provide funding to Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) to support their effective local delivery of soil and water conservation programs, services, and flood control.***

State funds made available to Virginia's 47 local SWCDs enable them to support and assist in addressing state soil and water initiatives and ensure the safe condition of their flood control structures. Soil and water conservation district boards are made up of locally-elected directors and appointed persons.

#### **This Objective Supports the Following Agency Goals:**

- Enhance public safety by administering effective dam safety and flood plain management programs.
- Improve the quality of Virginia's waters and the Chesapeake Bay through non-point source pollution reduction programs and sound land use management.

#### **This Objective Has The Following Measure(s):**

- **Measure 50320.01.01**

***Percentage of funds budgeted for SWCDs dispersed according to State Budget and State Board policies.***

**Measure Type:** Output

**Measure Frequency:** Annually

**Measure Baseline:** 100%

**Measure Target:** 100%

**Measure Source and Calculation:**

The Commonwealth's financial system (CARRS) enables the tracking of fund disbursements to SWCDs and can verify achievement of the measure following the close of the fiscal year. A report will be compiled at year-end showing the disbursements to all the local Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

#### **Objective 50320.01 Has the Following Strategies:**

- Seek Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board approval of SWCD agreement performance deliverables prior to June 1st annually.
- Establish grant agreements with 47 SWCDs, specifying funding amounts and performance deliverables, based on available funding by August 1st annually.
- Issue funding quarterly to all SWCDs according to grant agreement timelines.
- Assess fulfillment of performance deliverables for each DCR/SWCD grant agreement (47) and present to Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board by January 1st annually.